

**AN INTERVIEW WITH
DANIEL R. AND DONALD F. HELLWINKEL:
A CONTRIBUTION TO A SURVEY OF LIFE IN CARSON VALLEY,
FROM FIRST SETTLEMENT THROUGH THE 1950S**

Interviewee: Daniel R. Hellwinkel and Donald F. Hellwinkel

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Description

Among the oldest operating commercial garages in the United States is the C.O.D. Garage of Minden, Nevada. Founded in 1910 by Clarence O. Dangberg, the C.O.D. became a corporation in 1919, with Frederick H. Hellwinkel an equal partner. Mr. Hellwinkel's sons, Donald and Daniel (born in 1922 and 1926, respectively) have owned and operated the garage since the death of their father.

In this 1984 interview Donald and Daniel Hellwinkel provide an analysis of the origin and progress of the C.O.D. Garage, with particular attention given to its place in the community of Minden during the 1920s and 1930s. Other items of interest that are discussed include some of the early residents of Minden and a number of structures and businesses that were in the vicinity. A sketchy outline of Hellwinkel family history is included. The reader will find this to be an informed, evocative description of the changing commercial and social character of Minden, from its founding in 1905 through the 1950s.

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An Oral History Conducted by R. T. King
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University of Nevada Oral History Program

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PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber
Director, UNOHP
July 2012

ORIGINAL PREFACE

The University of Nevada Oral History Program (OHP) engages in systematic interviewing of persons who can provide firsthand descriptions of events, people and places that give history its substance. The products of this research are the tapes of the interviews and their transcriptions.

In themselves, oral history interviews are not history. However, they often contain valuable primary source material, as useful in the process of historiographical synthesization as the written sources to which historians have customarily turned. Verifying the accuracy of all of the statements made in the course of an interview would require more time and money than the OHP's operating budget permits. The program can vouch that the statements were made, but it cannot attest that they are free of error. Accordingly, oral histories should be read with the same prudence that the reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries and other sources of historical information.

It is the policy of the OHP to produce transcripts that are as close to verbatim

as possible, but some alteration of the text is generally both unavoidable and desirable. When human speech is captured in print the result can be a morass of tangled syntax, false starts and incomplete sentences, sometimes verging on incoherency. The type font contains no symbols for the physical gestures and the diverse vocal modulations that are integral parts of communication through speech. Experience shows that totally verbatim transcripts are often totally unreadable and therefore a total waste of the resources expended in their production. While keeping alterations to a minimum the OHP will, in preparing a text.

a. generally delete false starts, redundancies and the uhs, ahs and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled;

b. occasionally compress language that would be confusing to the reader in unaltered form;

c. rarely shift a portion of a transcript to place it in its proper context; and

d. enclose in [brackets] explanatory information or words that were not uttered

but have been added to render the text intelligible.

There will be readers who prefer to take their oral history straight, without even the minimal editing that occurred in the production of this text; they are directed to the tape recording.

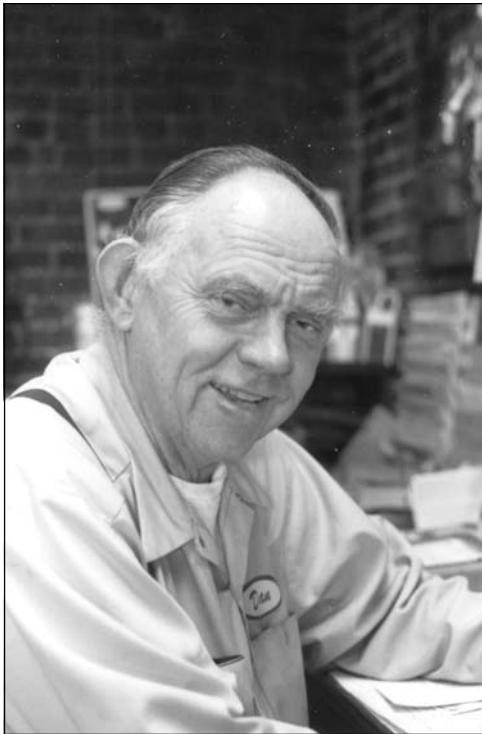
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INTRODUCTION

Among the oldest operating commercial garages in the United States is the C.O.D. Garage of Minden, Nevada. Founded in 1910 by Clarence O. Dangberg, the C.O.D. became a corporation in 1919, with Frederick H. Hellwinkel an equal partner. Mr. Hellwinkel's sons, Donald and Daniel (born in 1922 and 1926, respectively) have owned and operated the garage since the death of their father.

In this 1984 interview Donald and Daniel Hellwinkel provide an analysis of the origin and progress of the C.O.D. Garage, with particular attention given to its place in the community of Minden during the 1920s and 1930s. Other items of interest that are discussed include some of the early residents of Minden and a number of structures and businesses that were in the vicinity. A sketchy outline of Hellwinkel family history is included. The reader will find this to be an informed, evocative description of the changing commercial and social character of Minden, from its founding in 1905 through the 1950s.



DANIEL R. HELLWINKEL
1984



DONALD F. HELLWINKEL
1984

AN INTERVIEW WITH DANIEL R. AND DONALD F. HELLWINKEL

R. T. King: I'd like to begin the interview by having you tell me something about your own life and about your family. Why don't we start with your memory of your grandparents?

Dan Hellwinkel: On my mother's side, they were Raycrafts; lived in Genoa. I can just vaguely remember my grandfather Raycraft. My grandmother Raycraft I remember quite well. The last 8, 10 years of her life, I guess, she lived with us, so I knew her quite well.

What was her first name?

Dan H: Anna. And she was a Hickey. That was her maiden name.

What was your grandfather's first name?

Dan H: Dick. That's where my middle name come from. His name was Dick Raycraft. He was sort of a prospector and a miner. Also over in Genoa there was a hotel called the Raycraft Hotel. That was theirs. I

can't really remember when it was closed; I imagine in the 1920s, something like that. They were quite prominent people in Genoa, had a lot of property, and those kinds of things. The hotel was built in Genoa mainly for the settlers coming through on the way to California.

Were they amongst the original settlers?

Dan H: Yes, that's right. My mother used to talk about her grandmother and grandfather [coming] over to Genoa by covered wagon. I think she had 8, 10 children. They were really headed for California, and they got this far, and I guess she put her foot down and said, by God, she was going no farther! So they settled here.

Do you know what date that was? About what year?

Dan H: No, I can't remember that.

Where were they coming from?

Dan H: It was in the Midwest someplace. I think maybe around Chicago, somewhere around there. But that's the reason they settled there, and they opened this hotel.

I don't know if you've been around Walley's Springs or not.... They've just built a new building in the stone building that's there. What they built up on was built by my grandfather Raycraft. He, I think, was quite a handy man; he could just about do anything.

Tell me what you remember of your grandma.

Dan H: I guess when my grandfather passed away, she had pretty tough sledding. Down in Gardnerville she had a boardinghouse where she mainly took schoolteachers in and gave them room and board. She had 4 children—3 boys and 1 girl, who was my mother. I guess they were quite young when she had to do this. My mother was the oldest.

[Grandmother] had these other 3 boys that were all... 2 of them graduated from the University of Nevada; one of them died when he was about 17, 18 years old. And she had pretty tough sledding. Then she did move down here to Minden and had a home here, too, that she kept a couple of schoolteachers in the wintertime. Then after that she became a little feeble, and her mind wasn't too good, and that's when she moved in with my mother and stayed there to the time of her death. It must be 25, 30 years ago, I guess, that she passed away, because my father has been gone 20 years, and it was quite a while before that; I don't really remember dates.

That's an interesting practice that you've just told me about—taking in schoolteachers. Of course, that's a custom that died out a long time ago, along with the custom of the young, unmarried schoolteacher. Did your grandma

ever talk to you about the schoolteachers that would come to her boardinghouse?

Dan H: Oh, some of the things I can remember. One of the things that happened is that as years went by some of these people that had stayed with her would always come back to see her, and always remembered her at Christmastime. As they became married and had their own families and had their own children and stuff, she was always sort of invited into the.. .part of their family; I mean she always knew what was going on and all those kinds of things. It created quite a relationship.

Did your grandfather Raycraft always run the hotel? Did he have any other enterprises?

Dan H: He was mainly a prospector. He spent a lot of his time out in Tonopah, Goldfield...I think that's where he passed away. The hotel was mainly ran by my great-grandmother and then wound up being run by my grandmother until, as the time changed, there was no more need for a hotel in Genoa. That's when they closed it.

Did your grandfather have any success prospecting?

Dan H: Oh, according to my mother he'd found a very good vein of ore, he thought. Some promoters from New York come in and wanted to buy it from him, and he didn't want to sell it; he figured he really had something. And so he took a share of the action, and they come and spent a lot of money—built a mill and everything, and got all ready to go. They started to mine a little bit, and the vein ended. He didn't get anything, and they lost a lot. He could have sold the property to start with for probably quite a bit of money in those days.

Another thing that my mother used to tell me is that her father used to tell her that they could walk from Genoa to the shores of Lake Tahoe on their own property. And they sold it (I can't tell you the year of that either) to the Clover Valley Lumber Company. And the Clover Valley Lumber Company wound up being the Placerville Lumber Company, and then they sold it off. But in those times, I guess a lot of that ground wasn't... they figured it was no good; that it was just rocks and trees.

What about your grandparents on the Hellwinkel side?

Dan H: My father was born just out of Gardnerville, and his mother and father both came from Germany—I think an area [near] Neddenerbergen. His mother's name (or my grandmother on my father's side) was Winkelmann. There's quite a few Winkelmanns over there and some that are relatives. That was the area they came from, about 40, 50 miles from Hannover.

So your grandparents come to this country—the Hellwinkel grandparents. Do you have any idea about when they arrived here?

Dan H: No.

Did they stop anywhere in the East before coming all the way out to Nevada?

Dan H: I really doubt it, because Carson Valley was mainly settled by Germans. Probably they had a ticket for here. Somewhere along the line somebody came before them and told them it was a good place to come, I imagine.

Do you know whether or not they were sponsored by any family here in the valley?

Dan H: I can't tell you that; I don't know. A lot of them were. That was never discussed.

Did your grandfather Hellwinkel ever talk about what he did in Germany?

Dan H: I never knew my grandfather Hellwinkel. He passed away when my father was 12 years old. And that's something that my father used to bring up to me all the time. He said, "You know, you're lucky to have a dad, since I never had one."

My father, I don't think finished high school; he went out and went to work. He first worked for a place in Gardnerville, and you might have run into his organization... a fellow by the name of Helberg. Henry Helberg had a place of business down [where the Purple Bottle is located today]. That was his garage and stuff. Then across the street from Sharkey's he built a garage, and it caught fire and burned up. But I guess he rebuilt it again, and then he went broke. My father worked a year or 2 for him, and then went to work for Clarence Dangberg.

Clarence had 2 places: one here [in Minden] and also down there in Gardnerville. Right across the street from [the Richford Hotel] is a building owned by Ted Bacon now. He has some of his antique cars stored in it. But there was a garage there, and my father first went to work for [Clarence O. Dangberg] there. I would imagine that's along about 1910, about that period of time.

I guess the trade that my grandfather had in Germany (my grandfather Hellwinkel) was a carpenter, because I have an awful lot of his old carpenter tools and stuff. That's what they used to talk about, that that was his trade. And like I say, he must have passed away as a fairly young man.

You don't know whether he took up carpentry after he arrived in Genoa?

Dan H: I don't think so. I think they must have come right here and went to work on the ranch.

A lot of these fellows that came over here came here and established a ranch and then went back to Germany to get their bride and came back again. Now, this could've been the other way around with my grandfather, because [he] had no other relatives here that were Hellwinkel. So it might've been that my grandmother came here, and then he followed. But I can't tell you this; I don't know.

You mentioned ranching before. Did [your grandparents] have a ranch of some sort?

Dan H: Oh, they had one just out of Gardnerville; it's owned by Mr. Lund now. On 756—that's the road that goes toward Centerville. It's on the right there. That's where my father was born and raised. They must have had 160, 180 acres.

Do you know whether he was prosperous or not, as a rancher?

Dan H: Like most of the ranchers here, the German people were very conservative. Financially, I don't think they made an awful lot, but they never were in trouble.

Did your father ever talk about what happened after his father died... with the family? He died at such an early age, it must have been difficult for your family.

Dan H: My grandmother had a brother by the name of Herman Winkelmann, and we understand he came and helped them run the ranch.

He came in from Germany?

Dan H: No, he was here.

I *think* that maybe my father wasn't interested in the ranch. He didn't want any part of it. He never really said this, but I sort of get a feeling.

He had a younger brother by the name of Clarence, and when he got old enough [Clarence] sort of took the ranch over, and Herman Winkelmann left. Then Clarence got appendicitis and got a ruptured appendix, and that killed him. So another uncle by the name of George (that was the youngest of them) took the ranch over and ran it to the time of his death. And then my aunt [his wife], who taught school in Gardnerville I think 40 or 45 years—taught first and second grade, and she'd always lived at home—she managed the ranch and hired my cousin George Jepsen to operate the ranch for 2 or 3 years, and then she sold it.

You said your dad got out of there as quickly as he could, though?

Dan H: Yes. I was really thinking that he maybe wasn't too interested in... although he used to help them a lot. Also, when they had a real problem, he was always consulted; they'd always listen to his advice.

[At this point Don Hellwinkel enters. In response to a question, Dan Hellwinkel states:]

Dan H: [Mother's] maiden name was Mary Josephine Raycraft. She came from... her parents lived in Genoa.

And she and your father got married about when? Do you have any idea of the date?

Don Hellwinkel: I'd say 1921, I think. I was born in 1922.

We've now gotten up to about where I think we can begin giving some attention to the C.O.D.

Garage. You said that [your father] had worked for 2 other garages in Gardnerville, I believe. Is that correct?

Dan H: No, I think it was one—Helberg. But he started for Clarence Dangberg in a...I guess you'd call it a satellite garage that he had in Gardnerville. That's where he started.

Did he ever talk about how he gained an interest in mechanical things—how he got involved in working in garages rather than doing something else?

Don H: I know he went to school in Oakland for a while.

Dan H: Yes. He never finished high school.

Don H: No. Then he went to sort of a trade school type of a thing, and he went down there and took an automotive course. He was always crazy for motorcycles, just loved motorcycles, and drove them, and was very good at maintaining them. Also, we were told he was a very excellent motorcycle rider.

And this would have been in the first decade of this century?

Don H: Yes, it would have been probably in 1910, I'd guess, around that time. Maybe before that. Probably 1905 or '06, somewhere in there, I'd guess.

About when did he come to work for the Dangberg garage, for the C.O.D. Garage?

Don H: It was in the latter part of 1910, I think. He came here to work as an apprentice mechanic.

What did he tell you about how he managed to acquire a major interest in the C.O.D. Garage?

Dan H: I think that as he worked for Clarence, instead of taking some pay.. maybe Clarence was the type of fellow who was gambling and drinking and this and that, and I think our father would just take a little interest in the business for his wages. Plus, I think also, to acquire the 50 percent he had, I think he bought part of it.

Don H: Yes. I think that [Anna Hellwinkel through my dad had loaned him [Clarence Oliver Dangberg] some money, probably in 1915 or 1916. And then he was getting in deeper and deeper. Somewhere along in that time I think that she also realized that she had to settle with her kids—that was Anna Hellwinkel, my dad's mother—and so she bought [Dad] off the ranch. She paid him off. And the money that was owed to her from Mr. Dangberg, plus the other money that he put into it, made my dad a 50-50 partner in the corporation that they started in 1919. This was incorporated as the C.O.D. Garage Company in 1919 by the secretary of state, state of Nevada.

Dan H: [In] 1938 or '39 he acquired the rest of it.

Don H: That was quite an interesting story how that came about. I don't know whether we want to talk about that or not, though.

Dan H: There could be some hard feelings from it.

Is there any way you can discuss it without saying anything that would cause hard feelings?

Don H: Well, it was just that the bank over here had loaned Mr. Dangberg some money

on his stock as collateral, and the bank was holding his 50 percent. My dad kept trying to buy it, and they wouldn't sell it to him. Through some different arrangements, they sold it to another party, and my dad raised Cain. They realized that they were in for trouble, so they reneged on the other deal and then sold him the other 50 percent of the stock in.. I don't know when it was, 1938 or '39. And he got it for a fair price at that time. Before, they were trying to hold him up.

Dan H: Since this time, some of the families that were in on this have turned into being some of our best friends.

Don H: Yes.

Dan H: I mean they didn't really basically have, but their parents did.

I'd like to ask you some questions about the buildings around here and also about the operation of the C.O.D. Garage. I realize that a lot of the information I'm going to ask of you is not information that you can provide from having witnessed it, but I hope that you can remember some things that your father may have told you about how things developed here. I'd like to start with what you know about the creation of Minden itself, the little community in which this garage is located. The Dangbergs were instrumental in the creation of this town, and of course, there are written accounts of how it happened. I'm wondering of the 2 of you can add anything to what....

Dan H: Well, our version is (mine is, and I think Donald's is probably the same thing) that the Dangbergs couldn't control Gardnerville. They wanted to have a lot of say in what was happening, and I guess they didn't. So they gave the V & T [Virginia &

Truckee] Railroad the right for the property, to put the railroad in here, but it couldn't go to Gardnerville.

Don H: They stopped one lap short.

Dan H: Stopped here at Minden, and that's when they created Minden. You may have heard that before. Have you?

Is this the version your father gave you?

Don H: Yes, that's....

Dan H: Well, there are other people talked about it.

Don H: We've heard it from quite a few people.

Dan H: Whether you got this same version from the Dangberg people or not, I don't know.

It stopped in the middle of an open field?

Dan H: Well, I think as the railroad came in, the town of Minden and it all was put together at the same time.

Don H: Yes, they developed Minden at the same time. We have a big barn over here that was a livery stable. We own that today. That was the livery stable for people that wanted to ride the train and also come leave their surreys and their horses here until they got on the train and went to Reno or San Francisco. Then when they came back their horse and buggy'd be ready here. They'd go to Smith Valley and Bridgeport and Bodie, and all the business from Bishop went through this area in the heyday. Bishop banked and everything here. The Conways and the Shermans that the

Conway grade and Sherman grade's named after, they all banked here in Carson Valley.

Do you know about when that livery stable was erected?

Dan H: I think that was 1918.

Don H: Might have been.

Dan H: It isn't as old as you think it is. They got a newspaper over there that shows a picture of it when they built it.

Don H: I thought it was before that, though, because during World War I there're some pictures of the guys coming back from war, and it was there then. I guess the war ended when, 1919?

November 11, 1918.

How long was it after the creation of Minden that the C.O.D. Garage was built? Can you tell me anything about the decision to build this garage? I'm sure [your father] must have learned from Clarence Dangberg why the garage was built here and why he chose to build one as large as he did.

Don H: We've heard some stories that the Dangbergs had all these sons, and they wanted a place for them—a niche in society around here. so they took different ones, and like John ran the gardening part of the ranch, and old H. F. Dangberg was the businessman and the cattle promoter. Then they had some other sons, different ones, and this one [Clarence] they wanted to set up in business. I think it originally started down there with wagons, didn't it?

Dan H: No, I think first with Model T's.

Don H: Yes, or some of the old...even before the Model T. Wasn't the Hupmobile and some of them before the Model

Dan H: No, I can't remember that. But I sort of have always guessed, and I could be wrong in this, that it was sort of that maybe Clarence was the black sheep of the family—that they wanted to get him out of the ranch, so they put him up in the automobile business.

Of course, there wasn't much to the automobile business at that time.

Don H: No, but they were smart enough and they had vision that they could see that it was a coming thing, and so they got in on the ground floor.

Dan H: And also.. .like you're asking why these buildings were built and why they were built so big for that era. That's a good question.

Don H: I could answer part of it, I think. The original part that we were in where the office is and the part that was built in 1911, I think it just turned out to be too small. Then they [the Dangberg Company] built the Minden Inn. And in those days people were very proud of their cars and stuff, and they [patrons on the Minden Inn, across the street from the C.O.D.] wanted to keep them inside, so they built the next part of this garage in 1919, the same time they incorporated [the garage].

Dan H: Donald, I think we should back up a little bit because the next part that was built is what we call the shop.

What was done in the shop?

Don H: That was where they would work on cars. They had pits, and that's where

they'd do the heavy, mechanical work, repair transmissions....

Dan H: If our father was here today, and he was to talk about the garage, where the hoists are today.... They called that the tire room. That's where they did the tire work. And then what we call the shop, he would call the shop. Where we're talking about this big area, the storage, he would call that the storage area. The front of the building points towards the Minden Inn; the part that points on 395 is the back of the garage.

Don H: The main street of town was going to be the main street of everything, but somehow it got twisted around. The real main street was going to be 3 blocks over, where the county road is now. That was going to be the main street of town. But I don't know what...I guess just the way things happened, well, it just got turned around, didn't it? The main street did change.

Dan H: But like I say, if our father was here, and he says, "I'm going out back to do something," he went out toward 395.

Now, I don't know whether you've run into this or not, talking about the Minden Inn, but it's always been a rumor, and I think it's pretty true, if probably not *exactly* the way I say it. It was supposed to have been lost to Frank Andrews over a poker game. I don't think you'll see the Dangberg people wanting to admit to this. I did ask Frank Andrews's boy, who was Bill Andrews—he was up here a year or 2 ago—and I says, "I always heard this, Bill. Is it true? Did your dad ever talk about it?" And he says, "It's pretty close to true." His dad came from Bishop and got involved with Fred Dangberg in a poker game, and I guess the stakes got pretty heavy, and Fred lost it to Frank Andrews.

When was that?

Dan H: That must have been somewhere in the twenties, I imagine.

Tell me some more about this C.O.D. Garage that we're standing in here. I'd like to know a little bit about how it was used.

Dan H: Like my brother said, the biggest area in which we have some parts and do some mechanical work was mainly built as a storage area for the Minden Inn. The Minden Inn in its heyday would have people come in with their automobiles and stay overnight, or the period of time they stayed, and they would have a bellhop. The bellhop would bring their car over here, or they'd call up and the fellow'd go over and get it, and the car was stored here.

Also there was a man called a night man. The garage was open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If a person who was staying at the Minden Inn wanted, his car was lubed at night or washed, cleaned up, and parked. That's what the biggest part was built for—mainly for storage for the Minden Inn—and I guess at that day they could see quite a need for it. And then gradually, as time has gone on, there's no need for any more storage for the Minden Inn [and] we've used it for other things.

Do you have any idea about when you stopped using that portion of it for storage for the Minden Inn?

Dan H: Oh, I would say it probably really ended along about 1944 or '45. It ended, I think, when there were no people available to stay here all night, and there wasn't really a need for it.

You mentioned earlier that that large room that we met in this afternoon was called the

tire room. I would imagine that there was a good deal more business in tires back then than there is today.

Dan H: The tire business, in our business, has greatly changed. Years back we had an awful good inventory of everything, and were basically the only place of this type [in the Carson Valley] that had anything or sold anything. There were some other small places, but we had a good inventory; and our tire business *was* good, as we had what the people wanted. But this has been changing greatly in the last 20 years.

Don H: Yes, more and more competition and different things.

Dan H: But mainly our tire business was generated from being able to supply the people with what they needed.

Well, how has business evolved here in the C.O.D. Garage over this lengthy period of time—more than 70 years— since your father first became associated with it? What are the major changes that have occurred in the C.O.D. Garage?

Don H: Our basic concepts have been pretty much the same. We've just taken on new, modern products. And we don't have to stock as much because there's more of it; so you stock it, move it quicker and haul it in quicker. Your inventories are moving faster. The old days, you'd have a product, and it would stay the same for years and years and years. You just could have it and count on selling it, but that's not that way any more.

We are probably the second or third oldest, continuous Goodyear family dealer in the United States. We are going on 65 years as a Goodyear dealer. Same family.

And of course, you're still associated with Chevrolet, aren't you?

Don H: Yes.

And what about Buick? I see Buick signs all over.

Dan H: But see, General Motors... if you went to Chevrolet Motor Division of General Motors and said, "How long have Dan and Don Hellwinkel been a Chevrolet dealer?" they would tell you just from the time that we took over from our father.

Don H: It was 1964.

Dan H: See, they don't run it, which maybe is a bad thing. They don't make it continuous.

Don H: They want to just give guys credit for the time that the actual people that have their name on the franchise—line 3, they call it. I think they took on the Chevrolet franchise as a direct dealer in 1919 when they incorporated.

Dan H: I think, whether it was exactly when they opened or what, they sold Model T's. And then when Chevrolet came out with their 4 cylinder, and it was a different concept of an automobile than Model T, they took on the Chevrolet line.

I know that the 2 of you own several other buildings around here. You've already mentioned the livery stable.

Don H: The barn, yes.

That was built in 1919 [or 1918], you said. Can you tell me something about the history

of that building? It was built as a livery stable, obviously, rather than for some other purpose. How long was it continued as.... You know, by 1919 we're close to the death of livery by then, anyway.

Dan H: Well, that's right. I don't think its life as a livery stable was very long. There was a fellow here whose name was Archie Miller. Down here where Stratton's Drugstore is there was 3 or 4 houses down there that they used to call Millerville. Archie used to tell me that he and his brother milked cows over in the Pioneer.

Don H: They used to call that [the livery building] the Pioneer barn, was what they called it. The City Garage, when they bought it, incorporated, then called it the Pioneer Motor Company.

They had Fords over there. I think at one time the C.O.D. had an outlet for Ford automobiles through the Pioneer Motor Company. Well, they [sold] Fords originally, and then they went away from Fords and came back to them again. They sold Chevrolets and Fords at 2 different places.

So it didn't last very long as a livery stable; then it became the Pioneer...?

Don H: It was some other thing in between there.

Dan H: Because Archie used to tell me that they milked cows [in the building].

Don H: And we didn't own it, then. Dangbergs owned it.

Would that have been in the 1920s?

Don H: Early twenties, I'd guess, if it was built in 1918. I myself believe it was built in 1914 or '15, but I don't know..

Dan H: But you can still see, when you go inside, the stalls for the horses. You can see the stains from the manure. But Archie used to tell me that they kept their cows over in this pasture that's in back of Maddy's Restaurant. The Union Oil station's over there, and they used to drive them across the... I guess it was a street, then, or just a road, and milk them in there. How many years that lasted, I don't know.

Also, probably you'll see us refer to this building as the F and F. They started a trucking concern here—Frevort and Frey. They were hauling mainly to Bodie and Bridgeport from the train. What period of time, I don't know, but they, I think, sort of gave it up and maybe wound up [going broke] or something, and that's when the garage bought it.

How long was it [the Pioneer Motor Company] active?

Dan H: Oh, I don't know. Probably 20 years anyway.

Can you remember when they stopped selling Fords out of it?

Dan H: They stopped selling Fords, I think, when World War II started, and there was no cars.

And then what happened to it after that?

Don H: Oh, then it was run as a garage, I guess.

Dan H: I think it was closed as a garage I would say along in 1943, 1944, wouldn't you say?

Don H: I guess so, yes.

It was a garage for private vehicles?

Don H: Yes. Then it became just a storage shed.

Storage shed for the C.O.D. Garage?

Don H: Yes.

I understand that there was a naval radio operation in there at one time.

Don H: Naval reserve training center in there. That was the aftermath of World War II. They started that probably in 1945, I guess? It was run by a fellow that was very active in the navy around here by the name of Emery Graunke.

Well, why did they choose to use the livery stable?

Don H: I imagine they probably got the building for little or nothing. It had a room in it that was convenient and small, and then it had a tall roof where they could put their antennas on it; it was a communication type unit.

Dan H: When they started these reserve programs, they were interested in trying to keep some of the people that were trained out of World War II, and keep them active in the reserve so they'd have a little handle on them. If you met here once a month and you kept this up for so many years in the time you were in, you got a pension for it.

Don H: You could retire and get pension. Some guys kept that up, and then when they dissolved this unit, they'd go to Reno to the naval reserve unit.

Dan H: But this never was too active?

Don H: Well, with everything after World War II, they... all of a sudden you got out of the mood for war and stuff. The government quit subsidizing those things, and it just pooped out quick.

So it's been used for nothing other than storage for the C.O.D. Garage since World War II, then; is that correct?

Don H: That's right.

Dan H: Basically, yes.

Can you remember who built the barn, the livery stable?

Dan H: I think probably the Dangbergs paid for it, I imagine.

Don H: But I don't know the name of the people.

Right down the block from us is what's now called the Pony Express Saloon. I understand it is quite an old building itself and that it's been here about as long as the C.O.D. Garage. Can either of you tell me anything about it? What was it originally built as?

Don H: It was a saloon; it was called the Old Heidelberg. We think it was built because all the festivities and everything were going to Gardnerville, and the Dangbergs wanted to have a place for their people to get a beer and have a party. A lot of the land in the town of Minden has got a cloud on it that you can't sell alcoholic beverages; it's built into the deed. They did that and then just put certain areas that you could sell alcoholic beverages. One was the Minden Inn. The CVIC Hall is free to do it, and I think the Heidelberg and other properties like that. We don't know, but we've

been told that they've got clouds on them to sell alcoholic beverages on this property.

Oh, that's another that we forgot, too, that where that naval reserve place over there is and the barn was a butcher shop for a while. Old Brinkman had a butcher shop in there. We've got a picture of that at home and the dates on that. Where that naval reserve unit was [there was] a butcher shop for a while, run by an old meat man that was around here that eventually built the Dangberg Meat Company down there. His name was Brinkman.

Dan H: I think that's where Fred the butcher first went to work as a butcher.

Don H: Yes, that's right, Fred the butcher..he learned the business there.

Dan H: What was this Dangberg's name [who built the Old Heidelberg]?

Don H: It was old Fritz, wasn't it?

Dan H: I think he built that. They called it the Heidelberg.

And how long was it the Heidelberg? When did it evolve into something else?

Dan H: I think before our time. I can't remember it being the Heidelberg. Then it was taken over by this Dangberg's daughter and son-in-law, and they made a grocery store out of it. They called it the Minden Grocery Store.

Don H: And she [Norma Dangberg] married a fellow by the name of [John] Ellis. Then they took it over and made it into a little grocery store, and it has a soda fountain in it.

It was sort of a little community store. It had a soda fountain in it and essential type things—bread and candy....

Dan H: Johnny Ellis in those days was quite a photographer. He took an awful lot of pictures and made postcards out of them and used to sell them there of the area. That was his interest he took. Used to go in there, and there'd be these racks of all these different things around the valley.

Don H: Another thing that they used to talk about then, in front of the Old Heidelberg they used to have a lot of bicycle races and stuff like that. In front of the Heidelberg there was a big field. And I remember them talking about they used to have bicycle races there on Sunday afternoons. They'd come drink beer and have bicycle races and bet on them.

They had a circular track or an oval track out there?

Don H: Right.

Dan H: Also, Donald, I was starting to think about this, too...they said that originally the main part of Minden was a bicycle race track.

Don H: Some part of it, yes.

The other thing, a lot of bricks—and I think bricks that were in this building—were made from a brickyard that was out in this area where there was a clay deposit somewhere. I'm not just sure where it was.

There were several brickyards located in the valley.

Dan H: [Anyway, the Old Heidelberg] turned into the Minden Grocery. The Ellises ran it quite a few years; they were running it when we were kids. If we wanted an ice cream cone or something, that's where we went down and got it.

And over where the Tumblewind is today, there was a mercantile store they called the Minden Merc, owned by Rood and Heidtman. When were kids, we used to say, "go to Rood and Heidtman's." Well, Heidtman must have bought Rood out and wound up calling it the Minden Mercantile. When Bill Heidtman decided to get out, Johnny Ellis bought it. And they ran it as the Minden Mercantile until about 12 years ago. But when they moved to the Minden Mercantile, they closed the Minden Grocery.

Even before that a little bit, I think when the Ellises had the Minden Grocery, the one part on the left, they put a little bar in there.

Don H: Put a restaurant over there and a bar in the other.

Dan H: And so then when they moved to the Minden Merc, they made a bar out of it [the Minden Grocery].

Don H: That's when the name became Pony Express.

Dan H: In the first few years, I think Ellises ran it, and then they started renting it. Since that time, it's been run as a saloon.

Don H: Restaurant and saloon.

Dan H: Even when the saloon was there, there was a Chinese fellow by the name of Fawn Yim that still lives around here; he's still alive. There was a little restaurant on the side of it, and he ran that with his wife. Now if you go over to this building we call the Pioneer, you'll see sort of a motor court that's still there on the....

The auto camp that's over there, yes.

Dan H: He lived in that and he raised quite a family there and ran this little restaurant.

Who built the auto camp?

Dan H: Well, I think that the garage here built the auto camp.

C.O.D. Garage did?

Don H: That was sort of the fad in those days that you'd have a place where you.... People cared about their cars, and they had to be under cover all the time. They'd want a place that you'd park them inside, and then you'd go into the little... you'd walk right out of that like our motels are today, although in those days they wanted a place to put their car under cover out of the weather.

Dan H: There was probably 2 motel units.

Don H: Two motor court units, it was called.

Dan H: Yes, side by side. And then there was a garage for 2 cars.

Don H: That was sort of the fad in those days. That was when people started moving around the country. And the modern thing was not to stay in a hotel; it was to stay in a motor court—quick, get in, unload your car, and have a place maybe to cook and stay for overnight, and then get back in and go again.

So your family operated the auto camp?

Dan H: Well, I think that they ran it through the Pioneer Motor Company.

Don H: Yes.

Another thing that I just remembered about the C.O.D. Garage that I wanted to tell you: when they built this storage area for the Minden Inn in its heyday, Minden Inn was the central hub of almost all the business in western Nevada. It was competing with Reno at that time. All the big cattle deals and all the big sheep deals and all those kinds of things were made in the town of Minden.

Lake Tahoe was in its heyday, and they had Tahoe City, and they had the Tahoe Inn up there. In the summertime the Curry Company used to run buses from Yosemite, and they'd come this far with the bus; then they'd park it in our garage, and we'd have to polish it and clean it and service it and get it ready, and then another bus would come from Lake Tahoe, from Tahoe City, to here. The people from Yosemite would then get in the one that went back to Tahoe City, and the ones from Tahoe City would get in the bus and go back on to Yosemite. They'd run that every day for 7 days a week during the summertime.

The Minden Inn was the headquarters for that. It had a reputation for serving very, very fine meals. They had homemade ice cream and that kind of stuff, homemade pies, and it was the *place* in western Nevada, if you were a big shot, to come to.

This is in what period of time?

Don H: During the Depression, the thirties up till about World War II.

Dan H: They ran these big Pierce Arrow buses; I know you've seen them—got canvas tops, and if the weather was good, they'd let the canvas down, and the people were riding in the sun.

Don H: The C.O.D. Garage had a contract with the Curry Company to gas and service

these things and fix them and make sure they were ready to make the trip back to Yosemite and another trip back to Tahoe City. As a little, boy, I was given 2 bits or 50¢ to wipe them off and clean them up, and do things like that.

In this same period, a little bit later than that, the Minden Inn kept storage places in here for 3 or 4 of their cars, so that people who would come here would have a car to use that was the courtesy car for the Minden Inn. They used to have a couple of sedans and a station wagon. I know they had one old station wagon; I remember it was a wood one.

And then a lot of the Hollywood movie people used to come up here to hide. Clark Gable was a very prominent figure that used to spend a lot of time [here]. He had a big, old La Salle that he used to keep here in the garage, and we used to keep it clean and polish it.

We had a night man that stayed in the Minden Inn; his name was Fred Frevert. He started out there as a young boy. He'd sleep in there at night and then work here in the daytime, and his job was to see that those people could get their cars out at night. That storage part was always open, and he was there sort of as a guard and a caretaker. And there were some wild stories told about Clark Gable and his girlfriends and different things that happened in this garage.

Dan H: Well, it also used to be.... The time of the night man being here, [the C.O.D.] was the collecting point for all the excitement of the community. These guys were out on a party or something, they'd always wind up down here! [chuckling]

Don H: And they'd pump gasoline all night and everything. The heyday had arrived, and that was that same time when the Curry Company was operating, using this as a place to maintain their vehicles.

Our dad ran a tow car, and he had the only tow car, probably, between Reno and Bishop. He used to tell us about how he'd run it night and day—he had an old 1927 GMC tow car. He'd drive all night and go as far as Bishop and pick up people and bring them back in to repair their cars.

Another interesting thing that happened in the C.O.D. Garage.... Over there in the middle of the 1919 building, where our wash rack is, there was (and it's still there with the water running) a pickle barrel. Mr. Dangberg used to always have a bottle or 2 of moonshine whiskey in there. And when they'd finish an automobile, he and his cronies would go there and finish it up by having a big slug of whiskey. That barrel and that water thing is still there, and we're going to continue to maintain it as long as the people with us use the water for that purpose. In fact, I'm looking for a wooden pickle barrel right now to continue, because the barrel that's in there is shot. It's probably the tenth or twelfth barrel that's been there. Moonshine whiskey was quite a thing in the heyday around here, too. Lots of people made a lot of money off that, and I suspect Mr. Dangberg was in on it, too—Mr. Clarence Dangberg.

Dan H: See, he was quite a boozier. One of the fellows that worked here for 40 years, a fellow by the name of Fred Frevert, used to tell us these stories—the bootlegger'd show up every morning with his bottle of whiskey and take the old bottle back because the bottles were hard to get. And I think that was one of the downfalls of Clarence Dangberg, that he was spending more than he was taking in.

Don H: Well, then he.... There was a lot of cars and stuff, and we've got promissory notes that were signed and never honored. People would come in and shake hands and give him

a promissory note that they would give him so many sheep and so many cows and everything at the end of the selling season for payment for the car. We've got promissory notes that were never marked paid, so I imagine they were never collected. Or maybe they were collected another way, I don't know.

Well, that's interesting. It's almost a form of barter for automobiles....

Don H: When you look at the C.O.D. Garage's corporation charter, it was an unusual one. One time we were looking at it because we wanted to sell insurance, and we were told that we'd have to change the charter because we were told we could sell certain kinds of insurance, but we couldn't sell the new modern kind. In the charter it said that you were able to barter for pigs and cows and sheep and do all that... Whatever. The thing was quite an interesting charter that the corporation was given to do business. You could do it by the barter method or money or whatever you wanted.

Did your dad ever talk to you about how to convert things like pigs, chicken, cattle and what-have-you into cash?

Don H: Clarence Oliver Dangberg did most of that. [Dad] was the mechanic, and Mr. Dangberg was the salesman. I don't think he had too much to do with that till 1934 or '36 when he had to take that over to keep the place from going under.

Were they still involved in bartering in the early 1930s?

Don H: I don't think so much.

Dan H: Well, I think, though, Donald... remember, he used to wind up with things.

Don H: Yes, but they were never in the original bargain. He's got things, but I....

Dan H: We never realized how he was getting them.

Don H: Yes, that happened. but it was because the guy says, "Well, I can't pay you, but if you want to take a cow or a sheep or something to be part payment...." He used to do that. But it wasn't part of the original transaction.

Another thing along that line that used to happen: the Indians in the area had great respect for my dad and the C.O.D. Garage because they knew they could come here, and he would loan them money, or he'd fix their cars and would charge it for them. The old Indians used to always see that he got paid.

Then the butcher shop down the street here that was called Dangberg Meat (Mr. Fred Dangberg—another Fred Dangberg—different branch of the family) used to do the same thing. They kept the Indians going in the tough times, and the old Indians appreciated it.

And when my dad died, the Indians made a special effort to come and see my mother. We don't know what the symbol was, but they.. .one old Indian.... Dad died in May of 1964. Fishing season was closed, and there should be no fish around, but they brought her a big fresh fish, which must have been a symbol of something that was important to the Indians... as a gift to her.

Did you ever employ any Indians as mechanics here?

Don H: No, never did.

Dan H: Other than as mechanics we did. We had an Indian fellow working for us here 6 or 7 years ago?

Don H: Yes, Garfield Frank. He was sort of a cleanup man and used to tinker.

Dan H: But the Indians used to be where a lot of the household help came from. When I was young, I was taken care of by an Indian lady by the name of Annie.

Did [Washos] ever gather around the C.O.D. Garage?

Don H: Yes. Particularly during the thirties when they had a lot of pensions and stuff, then they'd come here and pay their bills and different things like that, and then probably get them sold for more bills.

I remember during the period when it was a federal law that you couldn't sell an Indian whiskey. It was a very serious offense if you got caught at it, but they always seemed to get it. And [when they] needed money, my dad and Mr. Dangberg—butcher Fred—would give them \$5 for stuff, and they'd say they were going to go get food for their family, but it'd always wind up as buying this outlawed whiskey.

We could probably think of lots of other things. Mary Pickford used to keep her car in here, Clark Gable. Had a lot of movie producers from Hollywood used to come up here. When I was a boy, they used to keep their cars in here, or they'd borrow Minden Inn cars.

I liked to fish. My dad wanted me to work, but they'd con him into letting me go fishing with them because I knew where the good fishing spots were. I was too young to really realize what was going on, but I think one of them worked for Metro-Goldwyn-Meyer, and he used to come up here; his name was Mr. Stone. He was some kind of movie producer.. .very wealthy man.

Dan H: Old A. K. Bourne used to stop here. You've heard of him?

Don H: He was the founder of Singer Sewing Machine.

Dan H: He owned what they call Round Hill at Tahoe. Had a nice big home. He used to come here in the early part of the summer.

Don H: He'd stop here all the time and get his car gassed and fixed, and go to the Minden Inn.

Dan H: He used to always go in a house trailer.

Don H: Yes, he had a gooseneck type of a trailer. Very modern thing at the time; nobody ever had anything like that.

Dan H: He'd stop here on his way up and always stop on his way back.

Don H: Dad used to work here at night. He worked very hard and put 14, 15, 20 hours a day here. And the old Chinaman over in the Minden Inn used to bring in apple pie, cherry pie. They'd see [Dad] sitting over here late at night.. and I'd get wind of that and know that, gee, if I'd stick around over here in the hot summer night, they'd generally bring ice cream. Well, if they saw me sitting here, then I'd get in on the ice cream and pie. They really made wonderful pies, homemade pies, and wonderful, homemade ice cream, because the Minden Inn had its own dairy and poultry farm just to the west of Minden here.

When I first drove around the C.O.D. Garage complex, for lack of a better word, I thought it was 2 separate garages, because I noticed that you pump one brand of gasoline out in front and one in back.

Don H: We've got a unique situation. Somewhere down through that period of time probably it was the only place in town that served gasoline. And so they [oil companies] were all eager to have the business. Union Oil people, who were one of the original oil companies in the valley, probably set the first one up on the south end of [the C.O.D.].

Dan H: This end used to sell Union and Richfield. And on the highway side they sold Shell and Standard.

Don H: They sold Standard Oil over at the Pioneer Motor Parts.

Dan H: Because they came out with a rule that you sort of had to be 100 percent one or the other. And they finally agreed that this was sort of separate from that, so they got one kind in this end and one in that other. So they moved the Standard to the Pioneer and kept Shell in that end, kept Richfield out and kept Union here.

Don H: My dad had a corporation; he was shrewd enough to have made contracts with these people. Probably we wouldn't have Shell today, but they're scared of this contract that we have with them, which if we really got down to the nitty-gritty, we couldn't find it. He signed an agreement with them that they were to furnish gasoline at a special price, but we can't get the special price from them now because it's gone through jobbers and other people. I suspect there might even be one with the Union Oil Company. We don't sell enough gas for them to be happy with us, and they keep saying they want to take it away from us, but when we threaten them that we're not going to let it happen, they back off. So we have some kind of a long-term deal with....

When my dad died, the corporation continued to live. Those contracts are probably somewhere, to be honored. And that's why we have Shell on one end and Union on the other, still.

Another thing about the C.O.D. Garage, too—the cars used to be shipped in here by railroad train, 4 cars to a boxcar. They had special automobile cars, and they'd bring them in here special on the train. Then we'd have to unload them onto the depot platform, and then drive them out here.

I remember in 1941, I guess it was, when cars were really hard to get, they'd unloaded 4 Buicks. They were parked on a vacant lot over across the street here where our used car lot is now. Some Jewish fellows from Los Angeles spotted them, and they came in here and they started trying to bribe my dad. They were offering him great big sums of money because cars were scarce in those days. You couldn't get them unless you had priority or something. They kept offering him more and more money, and I happened to be in the office when he threw them out and told them that there wasn't enough money in the world to buy him off. He had good customers and good friends that had ordered those cars, and he wasn't going to speculate and make money off of their misfortune.

Does the C.O.D. Garage still deal in Buicks?

Don H: Yes, we're a Buick-Chevrolet dealer and a Jeep dealer; we took the Jeep agency on in mid 1963.

It must have been difficult to get through the Second World War with no automobiles being sold and tires rationed and batteries and gasoline and every other thing.

Don H: And help was hard to get. My mother talks about how she used to come

over here and lick ration stamps and put them on pads and turn them in so they could get gasoline; and she kept track of the tires and all that stuff. But this was a farm community, so they had a few more privileges than the big cities had. There was extra gasoline and extra tires and stuff because it was a farming community.

That was another interesting thing. When the boys would come home from the service, and they couldn't get any gas, my dad would always pigeonhole ration stamps. He'd make sure that they could get ration stamps to get gasoline to go out and party and get around, when nobody else would see that they got gasoline.

Did the family have any other kind of business going during the Second World War that would take up the slack?

Dan H: No. I think that he did pretty well.

Don H: It was a farm community, so that they *had* to keep it going. I mean, they had to keep gasoline and....

Dan H: I went in the service, maybe 8, 10 months before the war was over. So I was here all this time with him. He did, mainly run.. .he was parts man; he ran the shop. He must have had 4 or 5 people working for him. He did it all.

Don H: And he was a great man. The other thing that he would do is that when people's sewing machines'd break down or furnaces'd break down or their refrigerators'd break down, he would spend his odd nights and go fix those things for people in their homes. Particularly in the wintertime.. .their furnaces.

There was one story he told us that the Dangbergs used to have him come and fix

their furnace when it wouldn't work. They were very fussy, and they would make you walk on papers and everything else when you went in the house. He was fixing the furnace, and it blew up, and he got a big kick out of it because it pumped soot all over the house. They had a hell of a time cleaning it up! He thought afterwards it was funny, but at the time it was serious because he made their house full of soot. And they were trying to be so fussy about keeping it clean.

Dan H: I used to go with him a lot and hold a flashlight. He always used a flashlight, and....

Don H: Just give you hell if you didn't hold it perfect.

Dan H: Yes, he'd grab your hand and shove it over here, and [laughter]

We used to go down there [to the John Dangberg house] and walk in the back door and down the basement; there was always newspapers. [Dad] wasn't too clean a fellow. I mean as far as doing his job, and what he was doing was very clean.

Don H: He was sanitary clean, but his clothes in those days were greasy. I mean, you worked on a car and you got greasy clothes, and your shoes were greasy and things like that.

I feel, selfishly, that my dad did an awful lot for this community, and he was never ever given a bit of recognition for it. He used to run the fire truck. He knew how to run it, and he'd run it whenever he could, and then come back and work. And he was on the different town boards and did a lot of great things for the community, and very seldom charged for a lot of it. And he carried a lot of people—people'd go bankrupt, and he'd take it in the neck and

write it off. Several of his mechanics who couldn't make it during the Depression, he signed notes for them that their grocery bills would be honored, or took it into trade so that they could buy groceries, and kept them going. Those things are all forgotten. Other people now are the big shots, and they didn't do hardly anything for the community. I am not too pleased with that.

Now both of you belong to the fire department, as well, don't you?

Dan H: Yes.

Is there anything else you care to add about these buildings we've been talking about, or about this general area within the community?

Don H: You know that the building we're standing in now [annexed to the C.O.D.] was called the Minden Dry Goods building?

Yes.

Don H: From the pictures we've got, it must have been built about the same time as the original C.O.D. Garage was— about 1911 or '12.

we're standing in what is now the auto parts store, Pioneer Motor Parts.

Don H: My dad bought it from a fellow by the name of Henningsen. Nephew of a fellow by the name of Christoffersen, who ran it for years and years as a very first-class Minden Dry Goods. They supplied all the suits and hats and the boots and the stuff for the people around here and has a very good reputation and had quality merchandise. We've saved all the stuff that came out of here—that haberdashery stuff—and it should be saved

Don H: It's a subsidiary and a phantom company of the C.O.D. Garage, and it sells to the C.O.D. Garage.

Dan H: I think there's one building we haven't talked about, and that was the last one to be built. It was built in 1926. I can remember that year, because my father used to tell me it was built the same year I was born. That was the last building, it was mainly built, I think, to store new cars.

Don H: It was sort of going to be a showroom.

Dan H: Yes, and he used to always refer to it as the new building.

And where is it located?

Don H: It's the next building over, between us and the Heidelberg [now the Pony Express].

Dan H: All these buildings, all of the C.O.D. Garage basic buildings, were built by the same fellow—Herb Dressler.

Don H: But he wasn't the original contractor.

Dan H: No, he worked for Pete Jensen when they built the first ones, and then gradually took Pete Jensen's business over and built the other one.

Don H: Mr. Herb Dressler apprenticed under this fellow, Jensen, who built most all these kinds of buildings in Minden.

What other buildings did Jensen build here in Minden?

Don H: Oh, he built the post office, I'm pretty sure— it's the same design; built this building, Minden Dry Goods; and all the C.O.D. Garage. And then in 1926 his apprentice, Mr. Herb Dressler, took over and built it.

Was he related to Fred Dressier?

Don H: No; different breed of cats. They're forty-second cousins or something. There's a man [Fred Dressler] that can remember things: He can remember things down to names and localities and corner posts and everything. Fabulous memory for this kind of stuff.

You're related through Fred's wife? You're married to the...?

Don H: My wife is a Neddenriep, and she is Anna Dressler's niece. Anna Dressler is Marlena's dad's sister.

Dan H: See, if you went back here 25, 30 years ago, almost everybody was related. And now since the newer people have moved in here, it got away from...

Don H: My mother was a Raycraft, and Annie Raycraft was a Hickey, and the Hickeys were the Irish element in Carson Valley.

Pretty small element, isn't it?

Don H: Yes. Well, it's gone now, but it used to be bigger. The Basque and the Germans were the biggest element in the valley.

Dan H: I don't know what else I could tell you about the buildings here in the garage....

You've told me a lot; you've been very helpful. Thank you.

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